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EDUCATION WEEK

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School Programs Top States' Lists For Block Grants

Bush Proposal Is Given Little Hope in Congress

By Julie A. Miller

WASHINGTON—Governors and state legislators last week proposed that as much as $11 billion in federal education, worker-training, and child-welfare programs be consolidated into block grants.

Observers last week cautioned, however, that such an approach would radically alter the nature of the federal contribution to education and the programs offered by many schools.

Separate proposals released by the National Governors' Association and the National Conference of State Legislatures were developed in response to a challenge by President Bush, who included block grants in his proposed budget for the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1.

Mr. Bush proposed that about $15 billion in domestic programs be turned over to the states as block grants and asked the state officials to suggest which ones. *(See Education Week, Feb. 13, 1991.)*

Only one of four education programs proposed by the Administration for inclusion in a block grant was also nominated by the N.G.A. and the N.C.S.L.—the existing Chapter 2 block grant.

The $15.4-billion N.G.A. list includes 11

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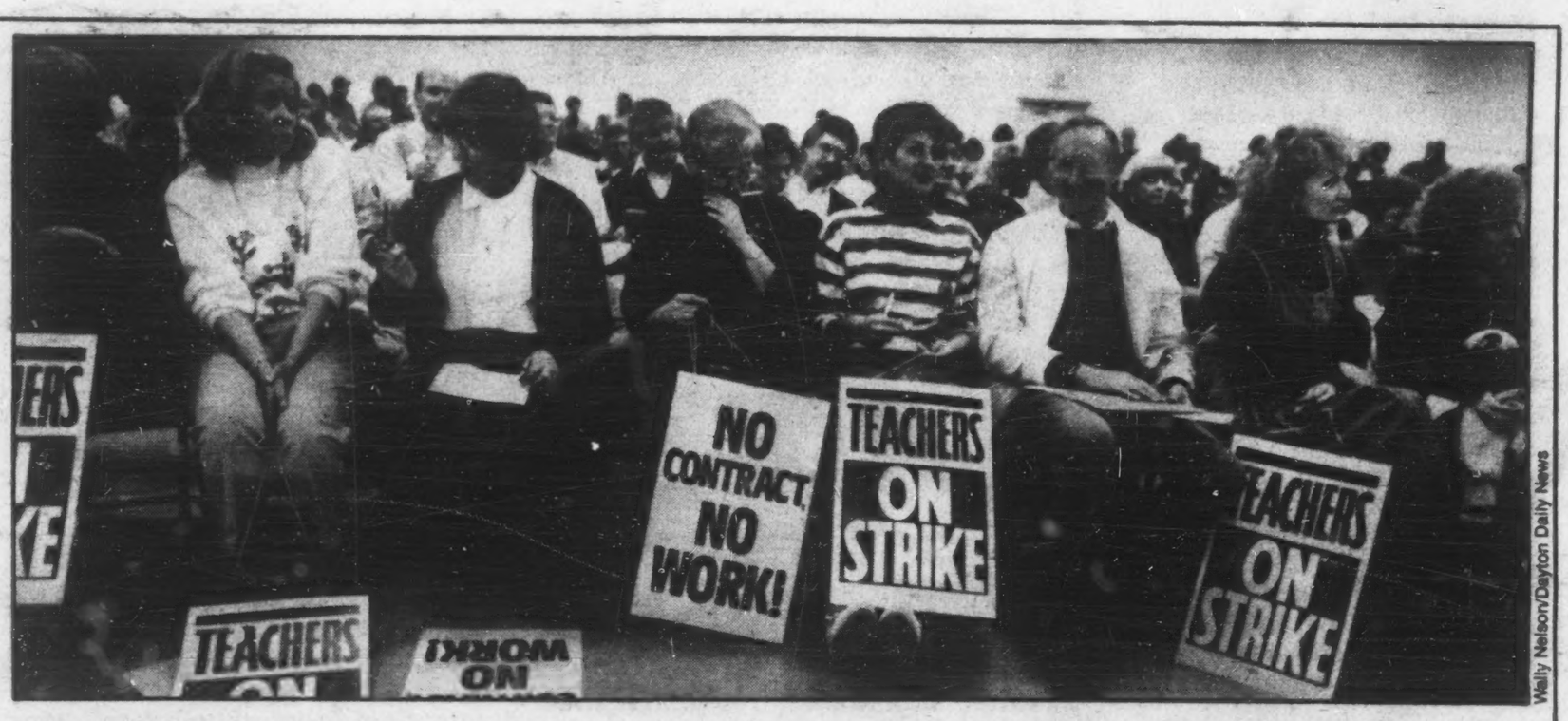

Wally Nelson/Dayton Daily News

Teachers in Kettering, Ohio, hold a strike vote in January before staging a three-day walkout—the first in the district's history.

Tight Budgets Escalate School Labor Tensions

By Karen Diegmueller

After nearly a decade of relatively harmonious labor relations, signs of rising teacher unrest have become increasingly evident in recent months, educators and union leaders say.

The new tension on education's labor front, brought on in large part by the economic recession hitting much of the nation, is seen by many as potentially jeopardizing school reforms fostered by the long era of peace.

Among the many events signaling a major shift in teacher sentiment are the following—all of which can be traced in large part to conflicts over money:

- In January, teachers in Kettering, Ohio, staged a three-day walkout—the first in district history.
- Teachers in North Kingston, R.I., struck last fall for the first time ever.
- Only 62 percent of Orange County (Fla.) Classroom Teachers Association members ratified their new contract this school year, down from the typical 90 percent passage rate for the union.
- Union leaders in South Orange-Maplewood, N.J., barely escaped jail last fall when they defied a back-to-work order.
- The California Teachers Association late this winter broadcast hard-hitting television commercials accusing Gov. Pete Wilson of trying to make budget cuts detrimental to children.
- New York City teachers rebuffed Mayor David N. Dinkins, who is once again seeking monetary concessions from the city's labor unions. "We have drawn a line in the sand, so to speak, about givebacks," a spokesman for the United Federation of Teachers said.

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Chicago Advocates To Press Lawmakers To Amend Reforms

By Ann Bradley

Supporters of the landmark reform law that created local councils to govern Chicago's schools will gather at the Illinois capitol this week to present strategies for amending the law to make its voting procedures constitutional.

Since the Illinois Supreme Court ruled last fall that the law violated the "one person, one vote" principle, members of several coalitions that support the 1988 measure have been working to reach consensus on a new voting plan.

The groups also are considering a number of other amendments to the law that would strengthen the power of the 539 local school councils and clarify their relationship to the central administration.

But reform advocates said last week they do not intend to arrive in Springfield with a lengthy list of amendments.

"We've gotten the message that it should be a short list and there should be wide consensus if we want to have a chance for them to be considered," said Margaret Morrison, director of Leadership for Quality Education,

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Building on Success, Catholic Educators Press Their Case for Private-School Choice

By Mark Walsh

BOSTON—During the past two years, Roman Catholic educators have succeeded in interjecting their longstanding advocacy of public financial support for private education into the larger debate over school choice, observers say.

Now, they say, Catholic educators appear poised to raise the stakes by working to muster grassroots support for including Catholic and other sectarian schools in any or all of the various choice proposals and experiments developing around the nation.

"What we are working for is the right for all parents to choose the schools for their children," Sister Catherine T. McNamee, president of the National Catholic Educational Association, said in an interview at the N.C.E.A.'s convention this month.

Catholic educators' desire to step up their efforts to push for the inclusion of Catholic schools in choice proposals is evident in several recent developments. For example:

- Catholic educators plan to make parental choice in education and the broadening of public and private financial support for Catholic schools a major theme at a "congress" they will hold in Washington this fall on the future of their schools.
- In passing a statement endorsing a continued commitment to Catholic schools, the nation's Roman Catholic bishops last November called for greater efforts to ensure that Catholic parents be able to send their

Continued on Page 16

Math 'Gender Gap' May Be Narrowing, Researchers Report

By Debra Viadero

CHICAGO—As late as the 10th grade, girls and boys score equally well on basic tests of mathematics, preliminary findings from a national longitudinal study of high-school students suggest.

The study's findings contrast with those from previous studies that have documented a so-called "gender gap" between boys' and girls' achievement levels in math that appears around the 10th grade.

Researchers said last week that the new data are significant because they suggest that the gap may be disappearing—a phenomenon they attribute in part to the fact that girls are taking more advanced math courses than they have in the past.

"It looks like the differences between boys and girls in high school are approaching zero," said Jon D. Miller, director of the study and of the Public Opinion Laboratory at Northern Illinois University. "What we're coming to is a point in time when boys and girls are taking the same amount of math in high school and achieving at about the same level."

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Also in the news

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The Pittsburgh schools are offering parents the chance to purchase bonds to save for their children's college.

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Lawmakers in the Lone Star State heave a sigh of relief after they finally pass a new school-finance plan.

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Getting Together
School officials in St. Paul and Roseville, an adjacent suburb, have approved a voluntary integration plan between the two Minnesota districts.
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Changes for New York Schools?
A New York State panel examining the governance of the New York City school system has called for additional community districts, elected school councils, and more accountability. **Page 5.**

Computers in Schools
U.S. students have had greater access to computers, and for a longer period of time, than their counterparts in many other countries, data from a 20-nation study suggest. **Page 13.**

Jayhawk Funding Feud
Kansas lawmakers' efforts to make their state's system of funding schools more fair were bogged down last week in a politically charged battle over how to pay for the changes. **Page 19.**

Green Light for NAEP
The Congress should extend the state-level National Assessment of Educational Progress in 1994, but only on a trial basis, a panel of experts has concluded.
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Getting the Pink Slip
Education Secretary Lamar Alexander last week acknowledged that five top-level department appointees had been fired and their positions temporarily filled. **Page 21.**

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CONVENTIONS IN PRINT
An Education Week guide to the annual convention of the International Reading Association.
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ACROSS THE NATION

NATIONAL

U.S. School Spending Near Bottom, A.F.T. Charges in New Report

The United States spends less on education than 11 other economically developed nations, according to a report by the American Federation of Teachers.

Based on 1987 data on 15 developed nations, the United States spends 4.7 percent of its gross domestic product on education, less than the 15-nation average of 5.4 percent.

The nation spends $860 per capita on education, fifth among the nations surveyed. The per-pupil expenditure of $3,398 is sixth among the nations.

Among other findings:

- At 19 to 1, the United States has the fourth highest pupil-teacher ratio in the survey.
- U.S. schools are much larger than those of other developed nations. Elementary schools here average 352 students, compared with 186 students for the other nations surveyed.
- U.S. teachers do not earn as much as those overseas. Average pay in the 1980's ranked in the bottom third of the nations surveyed.

The report includes data on Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom, the United States, Sweden, and Switzerland.

"This study lays to rest the myth that the U.S. spends more than other nations," Albert Shanker, president of the A.F.T., said in a statement. "No matter how you measure it, our investment falls short of being number one."

The report is based on data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Education Department, and the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Oganization.

The findings echo those of the Economic Policy Institute, which charged last year that the United States spends proportionately less on precollegiate education than 13 other major industrialized nations. *(See Education Week, Jan. 24, 1990.)*

Responding to the A.F.T. report, U.S. Deputy Education Secretary Ted Sanders said in a statement: "It's time we stopped searching for new statistics to suggest that we are not spending enough on education. In fact, education spending increased 30 percent over all during the 1980's."

Copies of the report are available for $5 each from the A.F.T. Research Department, 555 New Jersey Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

STATES

Miss. Supreme Court Frees Districts To Re-Negotiate Oil-Land Leases

Mississippi school districts that lease land to gas and oil companies may re-negotiate leases that are more than 25 years old, the state supreme court has ruled in a decision that will mean new revenue sources for many districts.

The so-called "Section 16" parcels are state-owned trust lands set aside to raise funds for local schools. Since 1978, school districts have controlled the lands. In many cases, the lands were long ago leased for long terms to businesses for small amounts of money. The state's high court traditionally has held that the section of the state constitution dealing with these lands does not specifically apply to oil and gas leases.

In fiscal year 1990, some 25 districts in the state—most of them in the southwestern portion—received $2.6 million from the leases. One received more than $460,000. Another 18 districts received nearly half a million dollars from mineral leases.

Typically, oil companies leasing the land receive seven-eighths of the oil and gas royalties, while the district receives the remaining eighth.

State officials estimate that the decision will mean at least hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of dollars for schools statewide.

■ **The Michigan Court of Appeals has overturned a set of rules for nonpublic and home schools set by the state Department of Education,** saying they were not promulgated properly under the state's rules of procedure.

The rules for home-schooling families included requirements for instruction during at least 180 days per year, mandatory social-science and science classes, and interaction with a certified teacher. The rules were challenged by Clonlara Inc., an organization that helps parents establish home schools, as well as by several home-schooling parents.

The department argued that its rules were an interpretation of state law of the type that is exempt from the state's Administrative Procedures Act.

In its April 1 ruling, however, the appeals-court panel said the department's rules "provide specific requirements not contained within the nonpublic school act," thus violating the administrative-procedures law. The court declared the rules invalid.

Jean Shane, the department's nonpublic-school liaison, said last week that the state board of education has asked the attorney general to appeal the decision to the state supreme court.

DISTRICTS

Student Gospel Choir Files Suit Over Equal-Access Regulations

A Philadelphia public high-school choir has filed suit in federal court against the city school district over its efforts to monitor the choir's personnel and repertoire.

In December the Philadelphia district issued regulations to implement the Federal Equal Access Act. Under the regulations, religious and political groups may use school grounds for meetings after hours as long as the group has no affiliation with the school or its faculty.

A spokesman for the district said that the Central High School Gospel Choir violates the regulations because its director is also a secretary at the school. District officials said that the choir may not rehearse religious music on school grounds while supervised by a staff member. If the group practices only secular music on campus, the choir director may participate.

J. Michael Considine, the lawyer representing the choir, said that the district is censoring the group, violating members' rights under both the First and 14th Amendements. The choir's gospel songs, he said, have a secular element in that they reflect the African-American cultural heritage. The district's action, he said, is "part of a frightening nationwide trend towards silencing religious expression."

The lawsuit also aims to protect the right of the director to continue working with the choir, an independent student group begun in 1987.

Mr. Considine said a settlement with the district may be forthcoming.

■ **Federal civil-rights officials are investigating an eastern Kentucky school district after a parent complained that school officials were mistreating her 5-year-old son, who has a seizure disorder.**

The U.S. Education Department began its investigation of the Pike County school district last month, according to a department spokesman, who said the complaint alleges

The Not-So-Great Pretender?

Students aren't the only ones who hate tests. Teachers sometimes get pre-exam jitters, too.

One substitute teacher in Arizona got them so bad that he dreamed up what state officials say was a desperate—and none too clever—plot.

The Rev. John Canales Ruiz, a 54-year old Anglican priest and part-time teacher, had failed the mathematics section of the Arizona Teachers Proficiency Exam 11 times.

Apparently daunted by the prospect of approaching more questions on plane geometry and sine curves, state education officials say, Mr. Ruiz devised his plan.

He allegedly arrived in a Tucson classroom last May to take the exam wearing a very unpriestly outfit that included a baseball cap and sunglasses. After he left the room for a bathroom break, a man wearing the same cap and glasses entered the class and finished taking the test.

The only problem, officials say, is that the man wasn't Mr. Ruiz.

A test administrator became suspicious when he noticed that the man taking the second half of the test appeared to be 20 years younger than the man who'd left for the bathroom. And then there was the matter of his very different handwriting.

When the official asked the man for identification, he left the room, and the first man returned, seemingly oblivious of any wrongdoing.

The state school board decided to send the test to the state department of public safety for a handwriting analysis, which they say confirms that there were, indeed, two testtakers. Mr. Ruiz has refused to admit any wrongdoing and was not present at the board's hearing of his case.

As a result, this month Mr. Ruiz lost his temporary teaching license.

And, just for the record, the not-so-great pretender helped Mr. Ruiz fail the exam for the 12th time. —S.K.G.

U.S. Near Top in 20-Nation Survey of Computer Use

By Debra Viadero

CHICAGO—Students in the United States have had greater access to computers—for a longer period of time—than schoolchildren in many other countries, preliminary data from a 20-nation study of computers in schools suggest.

According to the study, 96 percent of all elementary schools nationwide had one or more computers in 1989. Similarly, 95 percent of all junior high schools and middle schools and 98 percent of all high schools surveyed in the United States that year had computers.

Those proportions were higher than they were for a number of other countries and territories—including, perhaps surprisingly, Japan. At the elementary-school level, for example, only the Canadian province of British Columbia had a greater proportion of schools with computers.

"This is a historic moment," quipped Richard M. Wolf, a member of the international steering committee of the study for the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement. "This may be the first presentation of an international education study in which you see the United States at the high end of the scales."

The data, presented for the first time at a meeting here of the American Educational Research Association on April 3-7, represent findings from the first stage of a worldwide study on computer use in schools.

For the study, researchers from 20 participating nations surveyed teachers, principals, and computer coordinators in thousands of schools in the spring of 1989.

To track countries' progress over time, the researchers will replicate their efforts next year and, in addition, will begin testing students on how competent they are in using computers.

When the first formal report on the study is published in July, it will include an overall ranking of countries' computer use in schools, Mr. Wolf said.

However, Henry Jay Becker, director of the U.S. portion of the survey and principal research scientist at the Johns Hopkins University Center for Social Organization of Schools, advised caution in interpreting such rankings.

He noted that the comparisons may not be fully accurate, because different teams of researchers conducted the surveys in each country.

Moreover, he said, the Canadian national survey included only one province. The French study does not include private schools, which enroll 15 percent of all schoolchildren in that country.

And Britain, which has been noted internationally for its strong efforts to encourage computer use in schools, declined to take part in the study.

The 20 countries that volunteered to participate represent a wide range of nations, from third-world countries such as India, where only 17 percent of all high schools have computers, to New Zealand, which has put one or more computers in every high school and lower secondary school, to highly industrialized Western nations.

'A Rich Nation'

According to the study, the United States began putting computers in schools in 1981 and 1982—about two to five years before Japan. Only a handful of nations or territories, including British Columbia, Luxembourg, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, and the Netherlands, had computers in their schools at about the same time.

At the junior-high-school and middle-school levels, the United States ranked fifth in the percentage of schools with one or more computers. The four nations or territories with higher proportions of schools with computers were France, Luxembourg, New Zealand, and, again, British Columbia. Only 33 percent of Japanese lower secondary schools had computers, according to the study.

> *"This may be the first presentation of an international education study in which you see the United States at the high end of the scales."*
>
> —Richard M. Wolf

At the high-school level, four nations or regions—Hungary, Germany, New Zealand, and British Columbia—had a higher proportion of schools with computers.

The concentration of those computers was also somewhat higher in U.S. schools. The survey found, for example, that U.S. schools had an average of 32.3 computers for every 300 students in high schools that had computers. That ratio was the highest of any participating nation. In elementary schools with computers, there were 16.6 computers for every 300 students.

"We're a rich country and we can afford it," Mr. Wolf, who is also a professor of psychology in education at Teachers College, Columbia University, said in an interview last week. "You take countries like India, where a lot of the schools don't even have electricity—you're not going to find a lot of computers there."

"Whether it's faddistic or representative of something much deeper is difficult to say," he added.

Japan a 'Latecomer'

The researchers said that Japan's relatively late acceptance of the international trend in school computer use may be due to its rigid national curriculum, which, until recently, specified no computer-education courses. The number of computers in Japanese schools is expected to have increased by next year, when the researchers undertake the second part of the study.

"When a country decides to make [computer use] an activity, then it diffuses very rapidly," Mr. Becker said.

In this country, for example, Mr. Becker said, schools were acquiring computers at the rate of 300,000 to 400,000 a year from 1985 to 1989.

For the most part, American educators are using the equipment to teach computer-programming activities and, at the elementary-school level, for computer games, drills, and other computer-aided instruction activities. In recent years, however, computers increasingly have been used in classrooms in this country for word processing, Mr. Becker said.

In every country surveyed, educators said that the greatest obstacle they faced in making greater use of computers in classrooms was a lack of equipment. That problem outranked other possible barriers to expanded usage, such as inadequate teacher training and apprehension about using the equipment.

"It appears that there are not many computers sitting around idle," Mr. Becker said.

Survey by Chiefs Finds Little Correlation Between Mandates, Advanced Coursework

By Robert Rothman

CHICAGO—State-mandated graduation requirements do not always translate into advanced-level course-taking in mathematics and science, a survey by the Council of Chief State School Officers has found.

The survey, released here at the annual meeting of the American Education Research Association, represents the first state-by-state comparisons of student course-taking in high-school subjects.

It found that, nationally, 81 percent of students in the fall of 1989 had taken algebra 1, 49 percent had taken algebra 2, and 9 percent had taken calculus. In science, it found, more than 95 percent had taken biology, 45 percent had taken chemistry, and 20 percent had taken physics.

But the survey also found wide variations in course-taking among states. (The percentages represent a statistical estimate of course-taking of high-school students by they time they graduate based on course enrollments in fall 1989.)

And some states that had imposed strict curricular mandates—a hallmark of the mid-1980's reform movement—had relatively low enrollments in upper-level courses, particularly in math, according to Ramsay W. Selden, director of the state education-assessment center at the C.C.S.S.O.

"There is not necessarily a strong connection between states' requiring additional courses and students' taking courses at higher levels," he said. "Students are meeting requirements with courses not at high levels. [The mandates] don't appear to be driving kids into algebra 2 and calculus."

Mr. Selden noted, however, that some of the curricular mandates appeared to affect student course-taking. For example, he noted, in Louisiana, which requires every student to take algebra in order to graduate, more than 95 percent of the graduates had taken that course.

By contrast, he noted, Wyoming, which has almost no state-level mandates, was at the "bottom of the pack" in enrollments in algebra 2. Only 29 percent of Wyoming students had taken that subject, the survey found.

Full Report To Follow

Rolf K. Blank, director of the mathematics-and-science indicators project for the C.C.S.S.O., suggested that policies other than curricular mandates may affect course-taking. For example, he said, many states with high concentrations of rural areas may lack teachers to teach high-level courses.

He added that the full report on math and science indicators, which is expected to be released this month, will also include data on teaching conditions, school conditions, and equity.

In the future, the report will include achievement data from the state-level National Assessment of Educational Progress, as such data become available, Mr. Blank said.

In addition, Mr. Selden said, future reports may also include information on what is taught in science and math courses.

"It's important, ultimately, to look at the content below the course title," he said.

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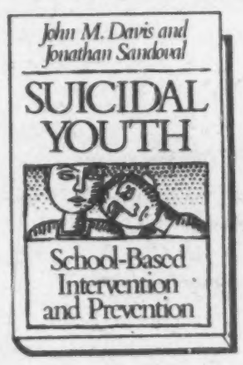

John M. Davis, Jonathan Sandoval

Suicidal Youth

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This new book brings together the leading research and practice on adolescent suicide and provides school personnel—especially psychologists, counselors, and social workers—with the resources they need to become more sensitized and competent in identifying and helping potentially suicidal youths.

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State Officials' Block-Grant Proposals Include Host of Education Programs

Continued from Page 1

Education Department programs—among them the $1.85-billion special-education program—that will receive a total of $4.58 billion in the current fiscal year.

It also includes the Head Start preschool program, currently funded at $1.952 billion; two child-care programs created last year and funded at $745 million; $777.3 million in child-health programs; and job-training programs worth $835 million in the current fiscal year.

The education-related items on the N.G.A. list total $11.2 billion in spending this year.

The N.C.S.L. package includes $7.074 billion in such programs, including $3.32 billion in Education Department initiatives. It includes bilingual education, which the N.G.A.'s proposal leaves out, but does not include special education or Head Start.

Each proposal is separated into programmatic areas, three of which cover early-childhood programs, school-based programs, and training programs for adults. The state officials proposed "limited" authority to transfer funds between separate block grants, but apparently seek virtually unlimited discretion over funds within each grant.

Coordination Cited

At a news conference, proponents argued that such an approach would allow better coordination of services and a distribution of funds that better matches each state's needs.

Currently, Gov. Carroll A. Campbell of South Carolina said, "Our ability to concentrate on the total child and provide all the services needed is kind of ham-strung."

"We're asking the federal government to cut out the micromanagement and give us the ability to get more money to the service areas," he said.

But education advocates and most Congressional aides contend that the block-grant approach presents more dangers than potential benefits. And observers unanimously predicted last week that the Congress would not seriously consider the proposal.

"If they can sell block grants on Capitol Hill, I'll push a peanut down Pennsylvania Avenue with my nose," said Bruce Hunter, associate executive director of the American Association of School Administrators.

Even Republican aides who support the block-grant concept concede that theirs is a minority opinion.

"I know my boss will support this, although he probably wouldn't support [inclusion of] some of the programs they listed," one Republican Senate aide said. "But I can't honestly say I think the odds are good."

Funding Cuts Predicted

Opponents note that appropriations for existing block grants, including Chapter 2, have steadily eroded. That erosion has occurred, they say, because such programs do not have a specific constituency lobbying for them and the Congress cannot connect them with specific results.

> Many in Congress see plan as a way of cutting funding.

"Block grants have been a back-door way to reduce funding and eliminate programs," said Michael Edwards, manager of Congressional relations for the National Education Association. "All our experience over the past decade points to a diminution of program support and the disappearance of programs within block grants."

Mr. Hunter agreed: "The governors must have the worst case of amnesia in history. I don't know who did the sales pitch for the Administration, but, if I had a used-car lot, I'd hire them."

The governors and state legislators proposed that overall funding levels be guaranteed for at least five years, and that individual states receive at least as much under the block grant as they currently do through separate programs. But observers said it would be difficult to hold the Congress to such an agreement.

"Anyone who wants block grants wants their funds cut," said John F. Jennings, counsel to the House Education and Labor Committee. "The only way to guarantee that the appropriations committees won't cut your funds is to make them an entitlement. And even entitlements can be changed."

Opponents also argued that the particular education programs targeted for consolidation are too dissimilar for block grants to really result in coordination of services.

Program Choices Criticized

In addition, they said, it was unwise to include the politically sacrosanct Head Start and special-education programs, as well as the new child-care programs the Congress is unlikely to alter just one year after a long, bruising battle to enact them.

Even the Council of Chief State School Officers, which represents state education officials, does not support block grants, said Gordon M. Ambach, its executive director.

Mr. Ambach said a better way to achieve greater flexibility would be the "performance agreement" approach nearly adopted last year as a demonstration program. Under such a plan, states or school districts would propose a coordinated service plan and receive waivers of certain regulations in exchange for performance goals.

"If you want flexibility, look at the children to be served and the programs serving those children, and ask for waivers of regulations so you can merge programs all designed to help those children," Mr. Ambach said. "There's more accountability, better assurance that the persons for whom the Congress actually intended the money get served."

The state officials said they focused on programs that were state-administered. But most of the education programs proposed for inclusion in the block grants either distribute money to the local level under need- and population-based formulas or involve competitions at the federal level.

Winners and Losers

If such programs were consolidated into a block grant, observers said, the total amount of federal funding received by a particular school district would almost certainly change.

For example, the federal vocational-education effort currently includes two programs—for displaced homemakers and the promotion of equity for women—whose funds are to be awarded competitively by states, but the bulk of the funds are distributed to districts based on population and poverty criteria.

The Education Department awards money under other targeted programs, such as bilingual education, to applicants whose proposals are deemed by federal officials and expert reviewers to be most deserving or promising.

Observers also noted last week that, while the state officials' proposals say "financial eligibility" rules would be acceptable, a program that allowed them to allocate funds according to their own criteria would inevitably result in a different distribution.

It is unclear exactly how much discretion state officials seek over the purposes to which funds could be put, and how much would be delegated to the local level.

The N.G.A. proposal suggests that block-grant legislation include "goals for the block grant and a description of the measures that will be used to judge the effectiveness of the use of block-grant funds."

How Much Discretion?

The plans do not say whether state officials could spend most of their mingled funds on one program and none on another.

Under such a scheme, observers agreed, each state would take a different tack.

"It would be very attuned to pressure from particular groups within the states and to what programs of its own a state has," Mr. Ambach said.

Some advocates predicted that many of the programs would simply disappear.

"The programs are established, by and large, because the states were unable or unwilling to meet the needs of certain populations," Mr. Edwards of the N.E.A. said.

"It's a good possibility with some of these [governors] that a lot of money wouldn't go to education," Mr. Hunter of the A.A.S.A. said.

"My guess is that collaborative services for young children—day care, preschool, early elementary—would be a winner, because that's where the national priority seems to be when you get a blue-ribbon group together," he said. "I suspect vocational education would not be a big winner, and I wouldn't be surprised if education of the handicapped was a loser."

Education and Related Programs Recommended for Consolidation

Program	FY 1991 Appropriation (in millions)
Chapter 2	$456.0
High-School Equivalency	9.8
Dropout Prevention Demonstrations	33.0
Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act	498.0
Vocational Education	856.0
[redacted]	[redacted]
Individuals With Disabilities Education Act	
Special Education Basic State Grants	1,854.0 [2]
Preschool Grants and Infants and Toddlers	410.0 [2]
Head Start	1,952.0 [2]
Child Care Development Block Grant	732.0
Child Care Licensing Grants	13.0
Maternal and Child Health Block Grant	587.3 [2]
[redacted]	[redacted]
Community Service for Older Americans	86.0
J.T.P.A. Youth Programs	1,394.0
J.T.P.A. Adult Programs	1,100.0
J.T.P.A. Dislocated Workers	422.0
Adult Education Act	239.0
[redacted]	[redacted]

Source: National Governors Association and National Conference of State Legislatures.

[1] Programs included only in the N.C.S.L. proposal.
[2] Programs included only in the N.G.A. proposal.

CAPITAL DIGEST

Bills Seek 'Tax Fairness' For American Families

Citing a need to promote "tax fairness for families," two Republican legislators have stepped up their efforts to increase the personal income-tax exemption.

At a news conference last week, Senator Dan Coats of Indiana noted that over the past 60 years, the personal exemption's relative value has dropped to only 20 percent of its original worth.

The current value of the exemption, he argued, is "far too low to help much with today's costs of raising a child."

Senator Coats has introduced a measure that would raise the exemption from its current level of $2,050 to $4,000.

The new level, he said, would allow an Evansville, Ind., family of four that has an annual income of $20,000 and that currently pays $1,774 in federal income taxes to pay less than $600.

Representative Frank Wolf of Virginia has introduced a similar measure in the House that would raise the personal exemption to $3,500 and would apply only to dependent children under age 18.

"There is overwhelming agreement on all sides of the political spectrum that it is time to reinvest in the family," said Mr. Wolf, who maintained there is strong bipartisan support for making the tax code more "family friendly."

"This is the most cost-effective social program we can advocate," he added.

Agency To Study Red Tape Snarling Migrant Programs

The National Commission on Migrant Education has contracted with another federal agency to recommend ways to lift bureaucratic roadblocks that impede services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers nationwide.

The Administrative Conference of the United States, an independent agency that was created in 1964 to examine regulatory and benefit programs and to suggest ways to improve them, will conduct the $50,000 study and report its findings and recommendations to the commission by next January.

The study was prompted by complaints raised at recent commission hearings held around the country about a lack of interagency coordination, said Lisa Carlos, a policy analyst at the commission.

One of the biggest barriers to obtaining services stems from conflicts between migrant-education programs, which serve migrants for up to five years but not seasonal farm workers, and migrant health programs, which serve both types of workers but only for two years, Ms. Carlos said.

Six different federal agencies, including the Education Department, run about a dozen programs for migrant or seasonal farm workers and their families, she said.

Don't Miss Our Midsummer Issue!

Education Week's Midsummer issue gives subscribers a chance to catch up with the news and events of the summer. And it's a great time for advertisers to catch up with our readers—when they have more time to spend with the newspaper. Advertising in the midsummer issue gives you a chance to reach educators and policymakers when they have a few weeks' respite from the frantic demands of the school year.

Education Week will publish its midsummer issue July 31. Don't miss this opportunity to reach the educators and policymakers who read *Education Week* all year long. For more information call Michael McKenna toll free at 800/346-1834. The deadline for reserving space in the July 31 issue is Friday, July 19.